

**AGENDA ITEM III A**

**PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

**SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN HEALTH STUDIES**

## **AGENDA ITEM III A**

### **PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

#### **SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY**

#### **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN HEALTH STUDIES**

##### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On April 20, 2005, a team of external consultants conducted an on-site review of the proposed program at Southeastern. This team was composed of Dr. Donna Slovensky (Chair), University of Alabama at Birmingham; Dr. James Zoller, Medical University of South Carolina; and Dr. Lucy Trice, University of North Florida. On May 12, 2005, the review team submitted its final report, which was immediately sent to the university for response. The university's response was received on June 27, 2005.

##### **STAFF ANALYSIS**

###### **1. Description/Curriculum**

The proposed baccalaureate degree is designed for students who already have earned a certificate and/or associate degree in a clinical health care specialty (.e.g, cardiovascular technology, radiologic technology, health information technology, etc.), have current certification or unencumbered licensure in an appropriate allied health specialty, and have graduated from an accredited institution. With the baccalaureate degree, students will have the appropriate credential for moving into entry-level managerial/supervisory positions in their professional area or in health education positions. The degree will also serve as a foundation upon which students can pursue graduate study in either health education or health care management.

The program is designed to provide the junior and senior-level coursework needed for the Bachelor of Science degree, but a student's length of study will vary based on the student's prior academic experience. Up to 30 credit hours can be awarded as a block for previous academic work completed in clinical specialty coursework. General education credits may transfer as well. The baccalaureate degree offers two concentrations: Health Education, and Health Management. All courses below will be taught under "Health Studies" rubrics, unless otherwise indicated.

## **B.S. in Health Studies: Core Courses**

Health Care Systems  
Problems of Aging  
Health Information and the Media  
Epidemiology  
Research in Health Studies  
Sociology 300: Medical Sociology  
Nursing 233: Pharmacology  
Clinical Practicum

## **Area Concentrations and Courses**

### **Health Education**

Foundation of Health Education  
Health Promotion/Program Planning  
Health Instruction  
Health Behavior Change  
Health Seminar (or Community Health, or Health  
Assessment/Promotion)

### **Health Management**

ACCT 200: Intro. To Financial Accounting  
Promoting Health in the Worksite  
MGMT 351: Management of Organizations  
MGMT 471: Human Resource Management (or Org.  
Behavior, Managing Diversity, Project Mgmt., or  
Business Finance)  
Health Care Law & Ethics  
Health Care Administration

The curriculum above represents a revision of the original proposal. The Board of Regents External Review Committee (ERC) had concluded that “the conceptual foundation for the program is judged to be sound” but identified several areas of the curriculum which could be strengthened. The University responded as follows:

*Based on the review, additional content has been added to the health management concentration... in the areas of health care systems, health care administration, financial accounting, health care law and ethics, and organizational behavior. A research and epidemiology course also have been added to the core curriculum, as suggested. In addition, we will review the guidelines from the AUPHA (Association of University Programs in Health Administration) in finalizing specific content of the health management concentration. Faculty in the program will continue to collaborate actively with local health care management practitioners to make sure content remains relevant. Courses recommended for deletion by the reviewers have been removed from the curriculum.*

Staff Note: the University also added a course to the health education track (Health Behavior Change) and a choice of two courses within the same track (Community Health and Health Assessment and Promotion).

## **2. Need**

The only other public university in the state which offers a degree of this kind is Nicholls State University, which offers a B.S. in Health Sciences.

The current proposal represents a direct response to community needs. Two private schools on the North Shore (training students in cardiovascular and radiologic technology at the certificate level) requested that Southeastern offer a program that would allow their graduates to advance academically. Also, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems prepared in June 2004 an "Assessment of Needs for Postsecondary Education on the Louisiana North Shore," a report which reinforced the idea that four-year universities should partner with community and technical colleges to offer degree completion programs. The North Shore Report also identified a need for 120 new health administrators in the two regional labor markets on the North Shore, every year.

The University's proposal also refers to the conclusions of the 2003-04 report of the state's Allied Health Workforce Council:

*The report... notes that specialty areas such as Medical Technology and Radiology need access to upward and lateral mobility...; it also notes that a bachelor's or master's degree is desirable for supervisory, administrative, or teaching positions. In addition, many of these areas are experiencing a lack of qualified entry-level faculty and individuals prepared for supervisory and management positions.*

## **3. Students**

Concluding that "based on interest demonstrated by the students who were interviewed, the projected enrollment likely is understated," the ERC recommended that the school should quantify the applicant pool available through all associate degree and health professions programs in the service area." The University responded:

*The University has refined initial enrollment figures... we now anticipate that 30 or more students will initially enroll in the program. We will continue to work with area certificate programs, as well as enhance our collaboration with Delgado Community College, which graduates the largest number of allied health students in the area who hold the associate degree. In the 2003-04 academic year, Delgado graduated 142 students who would be potential candidates for this degree. Our ultimate goal will be to develop 2+2 articulation programs with Delgado... we will also work with the LCTCS...*

Projections are as follows:

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
<b>Enrolled</b>	30	35	40	50	55	60
<b>Graduates</b>	-	18	25	30	32	40

Projections for the first year, the University states,

*are based on the number of students who have actually met with the department and asked to be notified should/when the new degree program is approved. They have stated they will enroll as soon as the degree is approved. In fact, some are currently taking core courses to be ready to progress should the proposal be approved. We have also polled students at [the private schools mentioned above]. That poll revealed that out of 44 students enrolled, 33 (75%) would be very interested in such a program... These numbers validate student interest in the program in the North Shore area. In addition, there are approximately 1800 students currently enrolled in allied health curricula at Delgado... Another pool of students includes those already in the workplace. While we have not yet surveyed them due to the complexity of getting names and addresses, we believe the interest would be high, since the number of schools offering this type of degree is limited.*

#### **4. Faculty**

The ERC concluded that health education faculty, with their experience and expertise, was a strength of the proposed program. However, the ERC observed a lack of adequate faculty to implement the health management track and its related coursework in health care administration.

*There are no existing full-time faculty with education and experience in the health administration field. The faculty and staff lack experience in advising the type of student expected to enroll in the program. There is an apparent lack of faculty capacity for expanding the number of course offerings and/or course sections.*

The University responded as follows:

*A program director will be appointed. This individual will hold faculty rank and be in a tenured or tenure-track position. [...] Priority will be given to hiring an individual that has credentials in the area of Health Management, Health Care Administration, or a highly-related field.*

*It is also estimated that two (2) additional full-time faculty positions would be needed as the program grows. The revised curriculum will required that at least four (4) new courses be developed... Therefore, at least one new faculty plus the Director will be needed with the start of the new degree and a second new faculty would be needed in the second year.*

The ERC also noted that “while School of Business faculty were committed to accommodating students in their existing courses, including adding additional sections if needed, they lack the expertise to develop the courses required to provide the focus on health care management.” The staff notes that the revised curriculum still indicates that management coursework will be taught in the School of Business.

## **5. Library**

The proposal included a detailed account of library holdings and budget figures for acquisitions. The ERC concluded that library holdings were indeed adequate to support the proposed program. Students have access to appropriate databases appropriate for both tracks, and the library has extensive journal holdings on site.

## **6. Facilities/Equipment**

The Kinesiology and Health Studies building will be the primary center for classroom and laboratory activities. The ERC concluded that while classroom and office space was adequate, “the plans for renovation and expansion will significantly improve physical facilities. Construction is expected to begin within the year.”

## **7. Administration**

The program will be housed in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Studies, which is in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The Program Director (to be hired) would report to the Department Head, who reports to the College Dean, and so forth. No changes to the administrative structure of the university are planned.

## **8. Accreditation**

There is at this time no national accrediting agency for programs of this type, but the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA) publishes curriculum guidelines. The University reports that it will review and use the guidelines as applicable.

## **9. Budget**

The current operating budget for the Department of Kinesiology and Health Studies is approximately \$1.7 million.

The ERC observed that the only additional costs projected for the program were for a new Program Director and two full-time faculty lines. While the number of new faculty seemed adequate to them,

*the cost estimate of \$121,000, if it is meant to cover the salary and benefits for three new positions, is inadequate.*

The University revised upward its projected cost for these three positions to be “approximately \$192,000 for salary and fringe benefits” and has stated that “the cost of these positions would be absorbed by the current operating budget, which would be enhanced from the additional tuition from students enrolling in the proposed program.” The University plans to phase in these hires as the program expands.

### **STAFF SUMMARY**

Need for the program is evident and well-documented. The design of the curriculum is sound overall and considered consistent with national norms. Student interest is well-documented and high. Projections for healthy enrollment are reasonable. Library facilities are adequate, as are other physical facilities and laboratories. Accreditation issues have been clarified, and university plans for following national guidelines are commendable. No administrative changes save the hiring of a Program Director are anticipated.

The lack of faculty resources for implementing the health management/administration aspects of the program remains an obvious concern. The university reports that a faculty member willing to serve as an interim Program Director can be appointed immediately; a search for a Program Director with the kind of credentials recommended by the ERC would get underway as soon as possible. The University plans to hire additional faculty as the program expands.

The staff notes however that a significant portion of the revised health management concentration would be new and would need to be created by faculty with appropriate expertise. These faculty have yet to be hired. Hence, the staff observes that, without them, the university is only in a position to offer the health education concentration initially.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

***The staff recommends that the Academic And Student Affairs Committee grant conditional approval for the proposed Bachelor of Science in Health Studies (CIP 51.9999) at Southeastern Louisiana University, subject to the following stipulations:***

- 1. The Health Education Concentration shall be implemented beginning Fall, 2005, subject to appointment of an Interim Program Director;***
- 2. By February 1, 2006, the University shall report to the Commissioner of Higher Education the status of the University’s search for a new Program Director and additional full-time faculty;***
- 3. Based on the contents of this report, and any other required subsequent reports, the staff shall sometime in the future recommend implementation of the Health Management Concentration.***